A1004

II. **Executive Summary**

a. Project title: Opening Up Butte Creek Canyon To Salmon and Steelhead Fish Passage
Applicant name: Institute for Fisheries Resources

b. Project description and primary biological/ecological objectives.

The goal of the project is to prepare a fish passage plan for reaches of Butte Creek now blocked by both natural barriers and hydroelectric dams so that salmon and steelhead, particularly spring-run chinook salmon, may use the stream for migration, holding, spawning and rearing. This proposal seeks funding to match 56% of the total cost of an ongoing project for which funds have already been committed from other non-State sources (44%).

c. Approach/tasks/schedule

The project will be carried out in three general phases, as follows:

- Organize a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) of Upper Butte Creek watershed community representatives and representatives of local, State and federal agencies having expertise and jurisdiction. Involve the PAC in the final development and adoption of the project work-plan and Upper Butte Creek policy. Complete this task within a month of initiation

- In collaboration with the PAC, develop a policy for Upper Butte Creek regarding introduction of spring-run salmon based on the evaluation of the salmon and steelhead habitat restoration potential, ecological considerations, land/property owners' concerns, the ESA and "safe harbor" protections. To assist in the formulation of the policy and future planning, organize the information in a map-based information system (GIS). Based on the policy, integrate the information into an Upper Butte Creek Salmon and Steelhead Fish Passage Plan. Complete all information gathering within eleven months of project initiation, complete draft GIS within twelve months, complete draft Plan within 13 months of project initiation.

- Obtain community and peer review of the draft policy and Plan. Prepare appropriate environmental documentation. Circulate draft and environmental document for review by public and agencies. Prepare responsiveness summary. Complete, deliver final Plan. Plan review will be completed within 15 months of project initiation, environmental documents with 16 and a half, the final Plan will be completed within 18 months of project initiation.

Details of the project tasks may be found at Section IV.b. of this proposal.

d. Justification for project and funding by CALFED

The restoration of Upper Butte Creek salmon and steelhead habitat is called for in the CALFED ERPP, the California Department of Fish and Game's 1995 Restoring Central Valley Streams Plan, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Anadromous Fish Restoration Program

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(AFRP), and CALFED's June 5, 1997 "Summary of Technical Team Reports - Stressors and Example Restoration Actions". Spring-run chinook salmon populations have been severely diminished through hydro-modification of the species' homestream habitats and of their rearing and migration habitats through the San Francisco Bay-Delta watershed.

e. Budget costs and third party impacts

The cost of the proposed project is estimated to be $278,500. The proposed CALFED portion of the cost is $156,780. Details of the budget are presented in Section V, Table 1, page 13.

The third party impacts that can be identified at this time are:

- Likely decrease in Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) DeSabla-Centerville Hydroelectric System output due to reallocation of streamflow to improve salmon and steelhead instream habitat conditions. These impacts will be the subject of a fair and reasonable agreement with the Company to be established as part of the overall project.

- Possible interference with present-day suction gold-dredging in the Upper Butte Creek canyon reaches. If these reaches can be restored as spring-run chinook summer holding habitat, the dredging activity will have to be moderated. In any case, if the spring-run are listed under State or federal endangered species acts, the gold-dredging will likely be banned.

f. Applicant qualifications

The Institute for Fisheries Resources has successfully completed six fishery conservation projects, including analyses of salmon restoration costs and benefits in the Columbia, Klamath and Sacramento river basins, in the past two years. Kier Associates has successfully completed large-scale anadromous fish habitat evaluation, restoration planning, and data management projects for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Klamath River), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Trinity River), and for the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (Garcia River). Mr. Reisner directed the NFWF-funded Butte Creek Fish Access project.

g. Monitoring and data evaluation

Project information will be organized in an easy-to-use geographic information system (GIS). See section IV for details of the system and plans for its coordination with others, such as CMARP.

h. Local support/coordination with other programs/compatibility with CALFED objectives

Support for the proposed project has been expressed by the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Anadromous Fish Restoration Program) and the California Department of Fish and Game. Support for the Butte Creek Fish Access project is currently being provided by PG&E and Sierra Pacific Industries.